

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ALGIER 02690 241731Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 /092 W
-----117882 241742Z /45

R 241700Z OCT 77
FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7413
INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 2690

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, AG, SS
SUBJ: AMBASSADOR'S CHANCE ENCOUNTER WITH POLISARIO

1. ON SUNDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 23, MY WIFE AND I WENT TO THE APARTMENT OF ABDERRAHMANE BENSID, DIRECTOR OF LATIN AMERICAN AND ASIAN AFFAIRS AT THE MFA, FOR A QUICK DINNER BEFORE GOING WITH HIM AND HIS WIFE TO A RUSSIAN BALLET PERFORMANCE AT THE NATIONAL THEATRE.

2. WHEN I ARRIVED, MRS. BENSID INFORMED ME THAT HER HUSBAND WOULD NOT BE JOINING US AS PLANNED BECAUSE HE HAD SOME UNEXPECTED VISITORS FROM ABROAD WITH WHOM HE WAS OBLIGED TO DINE. SHE SHOWED ME INTO THEIR SITTING ROOM WHERE BENSID AND THE VISITORS WERE HAVING DRINKS.

3. UPON BEING INTRODUCED TO THE VISITORS, I LEARNED THAT ONE WAS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE POLISARIO (NAMED "BOUKHARI" OR "BOUJARI"), ONE WAS A FORMER SPANISH AIR FORCE OFFICER FROM THE CANARY ISLANDS WHO HAD SERVED IN THE SPANISH SAHARA AND ONE WAS THE AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE MAN IN MADRID. THE MOST INTERESTING MEMBER OF THE GOUP INTRODUCED HIMSELF AS THE BROTHER OF THE PRESENT SPANISH MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND SON OF THE FORMER SPANISH AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S.

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I BELIEVE HIS NAME IS JUAN GARRIGUES-WALKER AND HE IS A SOMETIME JOURNALIST WHOSE FAMILY IS REPUTED TO BE CLOSE TO THE KENNEDYS. HE HAS CLEARLY ESPOUSED THE POLISARIO CAUSE. HIS MOTHER (WALKER) IS AMERICAN.

4. WHILE EVERYONE JOKED ABOUT THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR STUMBLING INTO THIS "HORNET'S NEST OF LIBERATION", THEIR DISCOMFORT CERTAINLY

MATCHED MY OWN. THE BRIEF DISCUSSION WHICH ENSUED PRIOR TO THEIR HASTY DEPARTURE WAS ALL VERY STILTED AND JOCULAR. HOWEVER, FROM REFERENCES MADE BY THE FORMER SPANISH AIR FORCE OFFICER, I HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT THIS GROUP CONSTITUTED A VERY UNOFFICIAL SPANISH ADVISORY COUNCIL TO THE POLISARIO.

5. FROM MY BRIEF EXPOSURE TO BOUKHARI OF THE POLISARIO, I FOUND HIM SURPRISINGLY ARTICULATE IN BOTH SPANISH AND FRENCH. HE CLAIMS TO HAVE BEEN BORN IN VILLA-CISNEROS WHICH HE REFERRED TO AS THE CAPITAL OF THE SAHRAOUI DEMOCRATIC ARAB REPUBLIC. HE DISPLAYED AN INDEPENDENT ATTITUDE WHICH LEFT NO DOUBT THAT HE WAS NOT ALLOWING HIMSELF TO BE PUSHED AROUND BY HIS "ADVISORS".

6. AS HE DEPARTED, THE MADRID AFP MAN WENT TO GREAT LENGTHS TO ASSURE ME THAT HE WAS NOT PRESENT IN HIS CAPACITY AS A REPORTER AND THAT HE WOULD MAKE NO MENTION OF THIS ENCOUNTER IN THE PRESS. I TOLD HIM THAT I SAW NOTHING NEWSWORTHY IN THIS CHANCE MEETING AT WHICH NOTHING OF SUBSTANCE WAS DISCUSSED AND THAT, THEREFORE, NO SUCH ASSURANCES WERE EVEN NECESSARY.

7. COMMENT: I AM REPORTING THIS INCIDENT IN ALL THIS DETAIL TO THE DEPT AND INFO POSTS IN THE EVENT THAT YOU GET WIND OF IT FROM OTHER SOURCES. IF YOU DO HEAR OF IT, PLEASE KEEP ME INFORMED AND FEEL FREE TO USE ANY OF THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE PRECEDING PARAGRAPHS AT YOUR DISCRETION. I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT I WAS SET UP FOR THIS ENCOUNTER BY BENSID GIVEN THE GENERAL DISPLAY OF EMBARRAS-
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SSMENT BY THE GROUP AND THE HASTE OF THEIR DEPARTURE.HAYNES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONNEL, SOCIAL RECEPTIONS, AMBASSADORS, LIBERATION FRONTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 24-Oct-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Format: TEL
From: ALGIERS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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